

Office *of the* Governor

Gov. Edwards Announces Aggressive Measures to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

March 16, 2020

Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards took additional significant measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Louisiana, further limiting the size of gatherings to fewer than 50 people, closing casinos, bars and movie theaters and limiting restaurants to delivery, take out and drive-through orders only. These changes are effective statewide at midnight. Operations may be able to resume on April 13, however, the situation will be reevaluated seven days prior. In Louisiana, there are 132 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and two people have died.

“More aggressive steps are necessary to fight the spread of COVID-19 across Louisiana. Following additional guidance from the CDC, gatherings of more than 50 people are no longer permitted, bars and casinos must close and restaurants will only be able to offer take out or delivery,” Gov. Edwards said. “These limitations were difficult to make, but they are necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19, protect the health of Louisianans and flatten the curve.”

“What we’re learning is that it can take two weeks for symptoms to appear. We believe we are still unearthing community spread that’s been around for the past several weeks, which means it is a statewide problem that requires statewide solutions,” Gov. Edwards said. “In addition to meeting with Sen. Bill Cassidy this morning who is supportive of our efforts, I was also on a call with President Trump and Vice President Pence that lasted more than an hour and they were very clear that we must significantly expand our mitigation efforts to slow the progress of COVID-19 before there is more community spread. Action must be taken now, even in areas where there are no confirmed cases yet.”

The Governor will update his public health emergency proclamation to include the following:

- Gatherings are limited to no more than 50 people.
- Casinos and bars will be closed.
- Restaurants will be closed to patrons eating on site. Take-out, drive-through and delivery orders are allowed.
- Movie theaters will be closed